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JOHNSON'S ACTION ON TROOPS SWIFT

He Made Decision Himself
as Aides Told of Peril

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 30

President Johnson made the decision to send marines into the Dominican Republic Wednesday after a warning from the United States Ambassador, W. Tapley Bennett Jr., that without such troops American lives would probably be lost.

The President put Army airborne troops at Fort Bragg, N.C., on alert last Saturday and ordered a Marine amphibious landing force on the carrier Boxer to lie off the Dominican Republic soon after the fighting began in Santo Domingo, informed sources said today.

But he did not make his decision to land troops until after Ambassador Bennett's message arrived at 3:10 P.M. Wednesday.

The President's handling of the crisis was intensely personal, although all his top advisers were consulted frequently.

How the Crisis Evolved

Constructed from reports by Government sources, this is how the crisis evolved and how Mr. Johnson handled it.

Mr. Bennett was in the United States when the revolt against the Government of David Reid Cabral began on Saturday. He was, of course, brought into urgent top-level discussions on the problem.

The President was at Camp David Saturday night and during the day Sunday, but kept in close touch with the situation.

On Monday and Tuesday, Washington received reports indicating that a force trying to put down the revolt and prevent the return of former President Juan Bosch was entering Santo Domingo and appeared to have superiority of firepower and armament.

Washington also learned that some leaders of the rebel faction, particularly the non-Communist supporters of Mr. Bosch, appeared to believe the revolt was a lost cause and were taking asylum in various embassies in Santo Domingo.

Thus, although the crisis was watched seriously in Washington, it did not appear greatly alarming at that time.

Communist Role Grows

By Wednesday civil order began to deteriorate seriously, in the words of officials. The forces led by Brig. Gen. Elias Wessin y Wessin lost their momentum and ran into stubborn rebel resistance.

The flight to embassies of many moderate non-Communist leaders of the revolt seemed to surrender some measure of leadership of the revolt to Communists.

President Johnson met Wednesday afternoon with a number of his leading advisers. During the meeting they received word that the chief of police in Santo Domingo had said he could not guarantee American lives.

Shortly thereafter came Mr. Bennett's message recommending the use of United States Marines. Mr. Johnson discussed the matter quickly with his advisers, made some phone calls to some other advisers, and then gave the order to land 500 marines—405 were actually put ashore in the first helicopter landing.

Congress Chiefs Summoned

The President then summoned Congressional leaders from both parties for a 7:15 P.M. meeting. In the meeting William F. Raborn Jr., Central Intelligence director, said it was believed that two of the leaders of the revolt were Communists and perhaps as many as seven or eight.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk described the events of the preceding few days and Defense

Secretary Robert S. McNamara reported on how many men he could put ashore and how long it would take. During the meeting Mr. McNamara received a note saying the marines had already landed.

Mr. Johnson told the Congressmen of this and said he had acted on his own and was not asking the Congressional leaders for authority.

Yesterday, after an afternoon report that snipers had fired on Marines, Mr. Johnson ordered the airborne troops to join the Marines.

Then the Administration shifted its diplomatic offensive to the Organization of American States. The O.A.S. Council was called into session to consider the situation.

After breakfast today Mr. Johnson met with members of the National Security Council to consider the next steps.

Late in the afternoon, the O.A.S. received a report from the Papal Nuncio in the Dominican Republic that both sides were agreeable to a cease-fire. The Council was called into secret session and voted to send José A. Mora, O.A.S. Secretary General, on a peace-seeking mission to Santo Domingo.

Shortly after 7 P.M. the President went to the White House theater to broadcast on nationwide television an appeal that the cease-fire be respected.

After the television appearance, Mr. Johnson returned to his office past festive party tables set in a corridor for Lucien Baines Johnson's senior prom tonight.